Straight Fork Refuse
AML Enhancement Rule Reclamation Project

Pike County - Pikeville Quadrangle
Project Description

The proposed project (30 acres total) will remove and reclaim an existing coal refuse pile located within Straight Fork of Bear Fork of Robinson Creek in Pike County, near the community of Robinson Creek. The project is centrally located at latitude 37°23'33.622"N and longitude 82°35'13.231"W (see the attached map). The existing refuse pile is a potential fire hazard, an environmental threat, and possible source of stream pollution within Robinson Creek. Gullies are currently located within the refuse pile. Such features indicate that the easily erodible materials are being flushed into Robinson Creek during storm events.

All coal refuse from the project area will be excavated and trucked to a permitted coal processing facility. Waste materials will be placed at the refuse/waste disposal site at the off-site preparation plant. Access to the work area will be via 2 existing roads. A portion of the lower access road will be newly constructed, and will also serve as a barrier for the local stream channel by forcing any runoff through a sediment-retaining sump prior to entering the stream channel. A vegetated berm will be maintained along the outslope of the lower road for its entire length. Additionally, a silt fence will be placed along the edge of the road. Excessive dust on access road surfaces will be controlled by watering equipment. Watering will also occur near public roadway entrances, in order to prevent tracking of excessive debris onto the roadways. All refuse removal will occur between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00p.m., Monday through Saturday, unless an emergency warrants a change of scheduled work hours.

The applicant/approved contractor will transport the necessary equipment (i.e. bulldozer) to the top of the refuse pile via the upper access road and commence to push the refuse material to the lower elevation work area. The lower access road will be extended, as necessary, in order to receive the refuse material for loading and to prevent runoff from entering the local stream channel. As the refuse material is pushed down-slope from above, the work area will be graded to a stable configuration. If deemed necessary, sumps and/or sediment traps, or other sediment control devices such as silt fences and hay bales, may be used to control runoff. Upon completion of the refuse removal, prompt vegetation and the establishment of a drainage channel, including structures which reduce flow velocity, will be constructed to control surface drainage and establish natural flow patterns.

Although a previously disturbed area, trees currently exist within the proposed project boundary. In order to prevent any takings of the endangered (USESA) Indiana Bat, trees representing potential bat habitat will be removed between October 15 and March 31, with written consent of the DAML Director. Any trees proposed for removal between April 1 and October 14 will require an approved habitat assessment or a presence/absence survey, to be performed by a qualified biologist, prior to tree removal.

Field inspections have revealed no seepage from the refuse pile. If conditions indicate a potential for water release during removal operations, water will be released in a controlled manner and allowed to bleed off slowly. Sediment structures will be constructed in accordance with DAML specifications, and will remain in place until all disturbed areas have established vegetative cover. The work progression will ensure that runoff passes through sediment structures before leaving the project area. No equipment will be operated within a local stream channel(s) without the Division of Water and / or U.S. Corps of Engineers approval.

The project site will be vegetated in accordance with a DAML vegetation plan as soon as possible after removal has commenced. Disturbed areas will be scarified, limed, top-soiled, seeded, and mulched. Top soil may be borrowed from on-site locations, within the project boundary, in order to establish vegetative cover. The entire work area will be graded to a stable configuration. Hardwood trees will be planted on the reclaimed site.